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THE DAY OF WRATH

By

Harry E. Jessop, D.D.

*“Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without
which no man shall see the Lord” Heb 12:14*

Spreading Scriptural Holiness to the World

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THE DAY OF WRATH

A Study of Prophecy's Light on Today

By

HARRY E. JESSOP, D.D.

The author recognizes in the world conflict a war not only against flesh and blood, but against spiritual wickedness in high places.

If is the considered opinion of many that in this war is seen, not an isolated fact, but a link in the chain of events which only satanic sources could inspire and explain.

Students of prophetic truth will find this book of invaluable assistance in interpreting present-day events in the light of Bible prophecy, for it presents a sound discussion of the Antichrist and his great deception and of death and judgment, which will be found Scriptural, logical, instructive and inspirational by all evangelical Christians.

The author is Dean of the Chicago Evangelistic Institute, well-known preacher, and author of "Foundations of Doctrine," "I Met a Man with a Shining Face," "The Ministry of Prevailing Prayer," etc.

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Dean of Chicago Evangelistic Institute

New York

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PREFACE

This book is an enlargement and further unfolding of an earlier publication. It had been the writer's privilege to place in the hands of his friends a brochure entitled *The Final Counterfeit*. This created a surprising demand, and soon the supply was exhausted. Inquiries for more copies became numerous; but it was thought that since the subject was so vital and its issues so far-reaching, the wiser course would be to increase the number of pages, making the earlier material a basis for a more extensive volume. Hence, this publication.

The writer realizes, as every prophetic student will immediately recognize, that, in one way or another, the same truth has been emphasized again and again. He trusts, however, that his own method of development may be used by the Divine Spirit to help those who may read.

He desires to express his appreciation for the splendid work of Miss Hester Withey in so artistically executing his diagram. This is typical of the many willing services she has rendered, both to him and to others.

H. E. J.

Chicago, Ill.

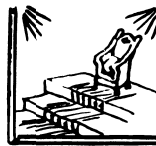
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CROSS TO COMING

COMING TO CONSUMATION

Lord's High-Priestly Intercession

ACTS
1:4-12
HEB.
9:24-28



HEB.
9:11,12
HEB.
9:24-28

Ending
in
Rapture
Acts 8:20,21

CENTRAL FACT

ALTAR



Sacrificial Blood Stream Heb 9:12

CENTRAL FACT

CROSS



John 1:29

CENTRAL PEOPLE **ISRAEL**

CENTRAL PEOPLE **THE CHURCH**

THE CHURCH AGE

Acts 15:14
Rom. 11:25

CENTRAL FACT

THRONE



CENTRAL PEOPLE **THE REDEEMED**

CHRIST REIGNING WITH HIS PEOPLE

OVER A RESTORED EARTH Is. 32:1
Rev. 20:4-6

DAN 2
DAN 9

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JUDAH

[In Babylon]

ISRAEL

[In Assyria]

ISRAEL

Abraham
Joseph
Egypt
Judges
Samuel
Saul
David
Solomon
Rehoboam

SCATTERED

Rom. 10:11
God will graft
them in again

Luke 21:24

confusion

Re-gathering
Anti-Christ
Great
Tribulation

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WITHIN FIRST CIRCLE

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**ENDING IN
CATASTROPHE**

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PART I
WHY THIS SLAUGHTER?

"For nation shall rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom, and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows."—MATT. 24: 7, 8.

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I
WAR!
THE AWAKENING OF THE MIGHTY MEN

"Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles; Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up: Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruninghooks into spears: let the weak say, I am strong."—JOEL 3:9, 10.

OUR generation has been a generation of conflict. Nationally and internationally, discord has prevailed. Statesmen—at times almost bewildered—have labored until nerve-racked and heartsick, but in vain; for, in spite of their mightiest efforts, that which they have dreaded has come upon them: the world is at war. Not that war is any new thing in the history of the race; its methods have changed and its weapons are different, but it has been the same horrible business of human butchery throughout the centuries. From the time of that lonely personal quarrel between the first two brothers within sight of Eden's gate to the sickening slaughter of nation by nation in more recent days, the history of humanity has been more or less one ghastly record of bloodshed.

As the years have passed, this warfare has become increasingly deadly, until, as we find it today, it is no longer a fight of soldier against soldier and army against army but nation against nation, each country mustering all available resources at its command and girding itself for total war. Civil

populations no longer enjoy a sense of security while their armies are locked in death grips on the far-off battle field, but are subject to the same merciless bombardment as their fighting men, and often face the threat of total extinction as death and destruction are rained upon them from the skies.

It would be idle to deny that we are living in desperate days. Cities whose construction and development have been the work of centuries are being rudely smashed and demolished. Treasure which by hard and patient endeavor had been carefully conserved is now ruthlessly squandered. The youth of the nations so affectionately reared is being mutilated and slain. The inventions of our keenest minds are of necessity brought into this ghastly business, and whatever new thing is evolved, if it has any destructive potency at all, is immediately turned into this same deadly channel. In earlier days the word would be, *The dogs of war are loose*. In this our day, however, we are increasingly conscious that we are dealing not with *dogs* but with *devils*. Surely hell has opened her mouth and spewed out her most vicious demons. They swarm over the land obsessing and possessing the minds of men, energizing, controlling and lashing them into a blind fury and unspeakable rage. Their damnable business, planned in hell's nether-most pit and executed through their blinded dupes, is meant to drive a sin-ridden humanity to self-destruction through racial suicide.

This, then, is no ordinary war. Never before has the world seen anything like it. Man, as man, could not have inspired it. There are persistent reports that one at least of its leaders has recourse to occult sciences and that his movements are directed thereby. Whatever truth such a report may hold, it is at least suggestive, indicating that in the minds of men in general there is the thought of something strangely uncanny about the entire business. It is the considered opinion of many sober-minded thinkers that in this war is seen,

not an isolated fact, but a link in a chain of events which only satanic sources could inspire and explain.

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II
IS THIS THE BEGINNING OF THE END?

IF it be true that this is no ordinary war, it is equally true that these are no ordinary days, for to say that we are living in extraordinary times would be to put it mildly indeed. If we are to place reliance upon the expressed conviction of many among the sanest students of prophetic thought, it is upon our generation that the end of the age is come.

"*The end of the age!*" someone echoes in startled surprise. "Do you mean to tell us that we are about to witness the end of the world?" No! We do not *mean* that at all, nor would we say any such stupid thing. We are aware, of course, that, concerning this, much wild talk has been uttered, and some professing to be wise have proven their utter folly in the statements they have made, but no clear-thinking person with a good general knowledge of Bible truth will allow himself to talk such nonsense. The world as such is to be regarded as having existed long before man was created to live upon it, and it will remain, though doubtless in a renewed form, even when God's present purposes concerning man have been completely fulfilled. What we do mean when we talk about *the end of the age* is that the events we are now witnessing seem to be undeniable indications that we have entered the period which is to witness the termination of the present world order. Society is in the throes of a world revolution, after which it can never be the same again. That revolution has been conceived in the minds of godless men inspired by

demons, but its final outcome will be far beyond anything its promoters had intended, for it will suddenly take a startling and unexpected turn.

There are times in human history when God visibly takes a hand. He did it in Noah's day, visiting upon the wickedness of men an overwhelming flood (Gen. 11). He did it with Sodom and Gomorrah, raining upon those wicked cities fire and brimstone out of heaven (Gen. 19). He did it in Egypt, overwhelming the tyrant nation with Divinely sent plagues (Ex. 1-15). These are but sample incidents of Divine intervention. Again and again the world has drifted on with ever increasing looseness in its Godward relations, when, suddenly and unexpectedly—for men have been too blind to see—the rapids have been reached and soon it has been in the raging torrents. Such a period is upon us now. For this poor, blinded world, so sadly cursed by the results of its own rebellion, much sorrow lies just ahead. But beyond the black night of suffering there lies a glorious dawn, for its ultimate destiny is an era of glory under the personal reign of the exalted Son of God.

He whom men crucified is coming back in person to reign, and in that day He will enjoy what men through the centuries have dreamed about and fought for but never obtained, a world-wide dominion, for concerning Him it is written: "He shall have dominion from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth" (Psa. 72:8).

It is toward all this that things in our day are moving, and events of amazing magnitude are transpiring. Our greatest difficulty is their immediate proximity. Living through them, it is not easy for us to evaluate them. If we could view them from a time distance of, say, a hundred years, when all their attendant events had had time to shape themselves, we would stand amazed at their significance. There is, however, one unfailing way of evaluation. "We have a sure word of prophecy to which we do well to take heed," and as we

do so, the only reasonable conclusion to which we can come is that the way of the Lord is being prepared. The events which we now see are destined to bring the death of the old order and the birth of a new day. *The death rattles* are in the throat of the world as we have previously known it. The old creation, groaning under the weight of its awful curse, has almost run its course. *The birth pangs* of a new creation are also being felt and soon the glorious morning of a new day will dawn. Ere this can happen, however, earth's deepest sorrow is yet to come. The shadows of that sorrow are fast stealing upon us, and soon the full fury of the storm will break, with all its thunderous blast; but before that day of final sorrow reaches the world, God's true people will be gone.

"Earth, what a sorrow lies before thee,
None like it in the shadowy past;
The sharpest throe that ever tore thee,
Even tho' the briefest and the last!

"I see the fair moon veil her luster,
I see the sackcloth of the sun;
The shrouding of each starry cluster,
The threefold woe of earth begun.

"I see the shadows of its sunset;
And wrapped in these the Avenger's form;
I see the Armageddon-onset;
But I shall be above the storm.

"There comes the moaning and the sighing,
There comes the hot tear's heavy fall,
The thousand agonies of dying;
But I shall be above them all."
—HORATIUS BONAR.

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III
**THE DIVINE CLASSIFICATION AS THE
END TIME APPROACHES**

AS the end time approaches, men are being classified. Nations are finding their places in their respective groups, although as yet there must be some strange and startling changes before the camps as described by the prophetic writers of the Bible reach their final shape. Events, however, are moving fast, and the ultimate line-up cannot be far away. Individuals also are being classified by their respective governments and placed where needed. In one way or another, this business of classification is covering the entire world.

Yet, while from the human viewpoint men are seen as nations, and nations because of political and military expediency are joining as confederating powers, God has a very decided classification, long since announced, to which all else must ultimately bend. This classification, students of prophetic truth have frequently declared, is expressed by Paul the apostle in this simple and seemingly unimportant exhortation, "Give none offense, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God" (I Cor. 10:32).

Yet, simple as it may seem, the division is vital—the Jews—the Gentiles—the Church of God! We must pause for an explanatory word concerning each.

The Jews. Here are God's ancient earthly people. Behind them is a great history; with them is a sore humiliation; yet before them is a glorious future. The present age is the period of their dispersion and chastisement, when, because of wilful disobedience, they are Divinely disinherited, cut off and scattered. But their revival and regathering is not far away, when the two long-severed parts, Israel and Judah, shall become one and together shall take complete possession of their Divinely deeded land. God's Word has declared this, and it cannot fail. What could be more clear than the following passages?

"Thus saith the Lord God; In the day that I shall have cleansed you from all your iniquities I will also cause you to dwell in the cities, and the wastes shall be builded. And the desolate land shall be tilled, whereas it lay desolate in the sight of all that passed by. And they shall say, This land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden; and the waste and desolate and ruined cities are become fenced, and are inhabited. Then the heathen that are left round about you shall know that I the Lord build the ruined places, and plant that that was desolate: I the Lord have spoken it, and I will do it. Thus saith the Lord God; I will yet for this be inquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them; I will increase them with men like a flock. As the holy flock, as the flock of Jerusalem in her solemn feasts; so shall the waste cities be filled with flocks of men: and they shall know that I am the LORD" (Ezekiel 36:33-38).

"Then he said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel: behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts. Therefore prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. And ye shall know that I am the LORD, when I have opened your graves, O my people,

and brought you up out of your graves, and shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the Lord have spoken it, and performed it, saith the Lord" (Ezekiel 37:11-14).

The early stages of that regathering have already begun, and although there is yet to come upon this long-suffering people the keenest of all attacks, they are destined to become again in the hand of Jehovah the instrument of His mighty purposes in the new age soon to dawn.

The Gentiles. The word "Gentiles" is here to be taken as indicating all earthly peoples apart from those of Hebrew extraction. The present age is therefore designated *The Times of the Gentiles* (Luke 21:24). It is so named because in this age the Gentile nations have been given supremacy, and for their conduct during the age they are to be judged when the Son of Man shall come in His glory and set up His Throne to reign (Matt. 25:31-46).

The Church of God. Here is a third company, distinct and different from the two previous groups, yet composed of both Jew and Gentile, the members of which are being taken out from among their former companies, and henceforth from heaven's viewpoint are no longer reckoned with them. They are a spiritual people, heaven-born and heaven-bound and destined to fulfil God's heavenly purposes; hence the utterance of that great Christian Jew in the Jerusalem Council: "God did visit the Gentiles to take out of them a people for himself" (Acts 15:14).

In the present age, united by faith with Christ their risen Head, these are to serve the age in which they live as members of His body through which He by His Spirit deigns to work (Eph. 5:30; I Cor. 12:12). In the age which is soon to come they are to reign with Him as His blood-bought Bride; hence it is written:

"Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish" (Ephesians 5:25-27).

"And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God" (Revelation 19:6-9).

It is these three companies with whom the events of the end of the age are immediately concerned.

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IV
TRACING THE CLASSIFIED COMPANIES

EACH of these companies, then—the Jews, the Gentiles, and the Church of God—has a Divinely revealed origin, a distinctly recorded history and a definitely declared destiny. They are clearly defined; their respective names are never used as synonyms, and when carefully observed they cannot reasonably be mistaken the one for the other. The course of each through the years may be traced in parallel lines running side by side, two of them continuously, while the third is broken and checkered in its course; yet all three have a clearly defined source, direction, and destination.

The accompanying simplified diagram, with its three circles shading the one into the other, may be taken as representing the major sections into which time has been divided, and running through them are lines representing the three classes indicated. The first circle represents the Old Testament period. Central to it stands the altar, prophetic in its sacrificial aspect. The second circle represents the present age. Central to this stands the cross, fulfilling the altar type and furnishing the Divinely appointed Lamb. The third circle represents the millennial reign. Central to it stands the throne on which Jesus the Victor King will reign with His glorified saints over a restored Israel and a redeemed world.

Within the First Circle

From Creation to the Cross

Amid the numerous happenings which the history of the Old Testament records, one emphatic purpose may be seen as running through and linking up the whole. It is like a golden thread holding together the numerous events; without it they would be a mere mass of loose ends. That great purpose, unifying the whole, is the calling, moulding, and establishing of the central nation destined to take so large a part in the history of the world.

The source of the Hebrew stream is the call of and covenant with the man Abram, whom we meet for the first time in the eleventh chapter of the book of Genesis, from which point we follow the chosen seed, a nation formative in Egypt, theocratic and monarchic in Palestine their God-given land, afflicted in exile, then temporarily restored to their own land, although not to regain sovereignty in it but ultimately to be scattered until the time of final regathering should come.

Beginning with the Babylonian kingdom under the headship of Nebuchadnezzar, we encounter centuries of world empire comprehending the period which our Lord designated *The Times of the Gentiles*, that period during which the Gentile nations were to have authority while the Jewish people were cut off (Luke 21:24). This period, beginning in the first circle, is found to continue into and through the second, only to end in fearful disaster as the age comes to its close.

Within the Second Circle

From the Cross to the Coming

The second circle represents the period between the first and second advents of our Lord, the period in which we now live. During this period the Jewish nation is Divinely cut off, her Messiah having appeared and been rejected. With the cry, "His blood be upon us and upon our children," her people drove Him to the cross, and in that very generation the horrible judgment under which they had placed themselves had fallen upon them. Jerusalem was besieged, plundered, and burned, and those who escaped were scattered and persecuted. The scattered national remnant then lay as dead through the centuries, but, meanwhile, the *Times of the Gentiles* was running its course.

Many years earlier, God had fixed the limits of that course, as in His threatenings to Israel He had declared that their national disobedience would bring them under a national punishment of *seven times* (Lev. 26:18, 21, 24, 28).

This *seven times* of Jewish chastisement seems to have had a twofold outworking, as is often the case with prophetic truth. It came upon the nation first of all in the form of seven direct and distinct punishments at the hands of other nations as chastisements for apostasy, as a study of the book of Judges will show. In each instance here it is recorded that the children of Israel cried unto the Lord, and in response to their cry the Lord raised up a deliverer. Yet, in it all the lesson which Jehovah was seeking to teach was far from being learned.

The seven punishments did not cure the seemingly ingrained disease, neither did they exhaust the declaration, which in its most complete fulfilment is to be understood in terms of time as a unit of measurement. As is well known, in prophetic thought *a time* is generally understood as indicating *a year* of three hundred and sixty days, each day being counted as a year of actual time, thus in its extended outworking a time in its prophetic aspect is three hundred and sixty years. Seven times, therefore, covers a period of 2520 years ($7 \times 360 = 2520$).

Parallel with this is to be seen a similar period viewed from an entirely different angle, namely the *seven times* of *Gentile madness*, spoken of representatively concerning Nebuchadnezzar, *the Head of gold*, but with fuller application to the great world system which he had been declared to represent (Dan. 4:16, 23, 25, 32). When this expression is used concerning Nebuchadnezzar, he is seen to be smitten with madness, but the condition is believed by many to represent the Gentile nations in their hatred the one for the other in general, and for the Jews in particular as the end time draws on, that period being undeniably marked in our own day.

This time period, then, governs both Jewish chastisement and Gentile supremacy. Daniel tells us where to look for its beginning, while our Lord Himself indicates the sign of its close (Dan. 2:28; Luke 21:24).

Throughout this period, according to the plain statement here made by our Lord, the Gentile powers were to be masters of Palestine, while its liberation and repossession by Israel was to be the unfailing sign that Gentile dominion was finished and Israel's chastisement was through.

The commencement, then, of the Times of the Gentiles is dearly indicated as being found in the lifetime of Nebuchadnezzar. Therefore, if history can

authenticate it, we have the exact period from which our reckoning may begin. Moreover, we are living through a period in which events extraordinary, to say the least, are happening in Palestine; it remains for the reader therefore to check his dates and do some calculating. The terminal dates are interesting, both for the commencement and close of this period, and each necessarily covers a number of years. A little careful reckoning from the beginning of the captivities to the time in which we now live will provide an interesting result.

Within this second circle also, beginning with the day of Pentecost, comes the inauguration of the Christian Church. When we here speak of *the Church*, our thought, of course, is not of *the churches* as we now know them; these at their best are but awkward expressions of the Church, and sometimes are little more than empty shells. A denomination may serve its Divinely ordained purpose and ultimately die, its day of usefulness having definitely passed; from that time onward, unless Divinely resuscitated, it remains a corpse. The proper thing to do with a corpse, no matter what its past may have been and however beautiful it may appear, is to bury it. If, however, instead of giving it a decent funeral, men begin to decorate it, eulogize it, and seek to make it move by artificial animation, it can only become a menace to society and a stench in the nostrils of all who come in contact with it.

The Church of which we speak, then, is a spiritual body, Pentecostal in its beginnings and cosmopolitan in its composition. It knows neither nation nor denomination. Within it are all the lesser loyalties, yet beyond all these is the one deep, abiding loyalty to Christ.

Within the Third Circle

From the Coming to the Consummation

Within this circle is seen the earthly coronation of our Lord Jesus Christ as King of kings to rule the world in righteousness. With the Church, His redeemed and raptured Bride, by His side, and Israel, His restored earthly people about Him, He will inaugurate His Kingdom rule over a redeemed earth and reign for a thousand years. Thus at last will come the Millennium, earth's golden age. Describing His coming forth, the Patmos Seer has written:

"And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations; and he should rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS" (Revelation 19:11-16).

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V
HEADING FOR THE WORLD CRISIS

It is the opinion of many trusted prophetic students that we have lived to see the period toward which the hand of prophecy so long has pointed. This being so, the generation of which we are part is standing on the farthestmost rim of the second circle we have shown. This in turn shades into the third circle; therefore it is possible that within the brief space of our generation the most tremendous happenings may be seen. These will concern all three companies already described and will be of such outstanding character that only eyes wilfully blind can possibly miss their significance.

Concerning God's Ancient People

Since their period of national chastisement is now closing, it is to be expected that for them better days should soon begin. As never before for centuries past, the Jewish nation is wide awake. It has taken rude shocks to awaken her, but she is now under no delusions as to how her final liberation must come. Inch by inch, she is being forced back against a solid wall, where she must endure her final test.

The present wave of anti-Semitism is by no means a passing phase. It is satanic in its origin, malicious in its character, and determined in its propaganda. It is directed toward the sharp, final sorrow which awaits this age-long suffering people, the shadows of which already are beginning to fall.

The seer Jeremiah, with prophetic vision attuned through the centuries, called it *the time of Jacob's trouble*, declaring a vision of men in pain like a woman in travail, with all faces turned to paleness, but adding this significant word, "*He shall be saved out of it*" (Jer. 30:5-7).

Simultaneously with the awakening of the *people* has come the liberation of the *land*. That land deeded to them by God Himself, yet closed to them during their period of chastisement by reason of their wilfulness and sin, had for centuries been trodden under the Gentile heel, stripped of its beauty and turned into a desert. Yet God had a time table; He had also His way of working it out, as the 1914-1918 section of the World War in its relation to Palestine so clearly indicated. Now Palestine's old masters are gone and the door to a repossession is at least partially opened. The rainfall so long withheld is now being Divinely renewed, and the land and the people so long separated by reason of Jehovah's chastisements are being rejoined (Ezek. 36).

That very restoration, however, is to become the unexpected gateway to Israel's final agony. While the awakening pangs have been suffered in the countries whither they have been scattered, the last great sorrow in its final phases is to be faced in the land itself. Gentile armies bent on Israel's destruction are to make a final invasion of Palestine, but this will be to their bitter cost, as the prophet Ezekiel so clearly depicts (38-39). These two chapters tell an amazing story, featuring in advance what newspaper reporters will one day rush to publish as the latest news. Did these men but know their Bibles they could acquaint themselves with at least the main outline of the facts before that time.

Concerning the Gentile Powers

This period of Divinely ordained Gentile sovereignty being completed, the dominion of Gentile power is forever to cease. Its sway is to end; its authority is to be laid in the dust; its rule is to terminate in international calamity and disaster. We have lived to see the day when the entire Gentile world is shaping itself for the final conflict. The ultimate line-up is not yet complete; some nations are manifestly in wrong company and must sooner or later switch sides. There is, however, sufficient evidence to enable anyone who has an anointed eye and a knowledge of the prophetic portions of God's Word to discern the general direction in which things are heading.

A. A Roman camp will establish itself.

It will be noted that we did not say, "The old Roman Empire will be revived." To such teaching as a general truth we do not object, providing it is carefully and sanely stated. That a Roman bloc is to come temporarily into being seems to be the clear teaching of the prophetic Word, but that such a bloc is to be an inch-for-inch resuscitation of all former Roman Empire territory is, we think, more than the Scriptures actually teach.

This end-time Roman bloc has been the expectation of many prophetic students, the contention being that the full details of the prophetic picture as given in the books of Daniel and Revelation have never yet been wholly filled out, therefore, say they, that empire must be again in existence to complete the story in the last days.

Strange as it may seem, it has been in this very period when prophecy seems to call for it that Mussolini has had his grandiose dreams of resuscitating the Roman Empire and restoring it to the former glory of the

Caesars. He seems to have set about the business in real earnest and through the early years of his administration made some remarkable progress; but his performance of recent years cannot be said to have enhanced his reputation. If Mussolini is the man of destiny, as some have been unwise enough to contend, he now appears to have a considerable distance to go. It will remain for coming days to prove whether he, or even an immediate successor, can accomplish such a task.

Concerning this Roman revival, the following Scripture passages are generally used:

"After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns. I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things. Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces. And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings. And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time" (Daniel 7:7, 8, 23-25).

"And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and

upon his heads the name of blasphemy. And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority. And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast. And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him? And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. If any man have an ear, let him hear. He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints. And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their

foreheads: and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man: and his number is Six hundred threescore and six" (Revelation 13).

"And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters: with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sitting upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: and upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration. And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns. The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is. And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth. And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come: and when he cometh, he must continue a short space. And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition. And the ten horns which

thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast. These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings, and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful. And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues. And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. For God hath put in their hearts to fulfill his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled. And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth" (Revelation 17).

B. A Northern Confederacy is to be formed.

This too has been the expectation of prophetic students based on Ezekiel's forecast (38-39).

There, Russia and Germany, supported by other nations, are seen to be casting covetous eyes on the land of Palestine, and finally determining to invade it. It will be noted that we say *Russia* and Germany, not *Germany* and Russia. Russia is to take the lead.^[1]

Even a casual reading of these two chapters will indicate how clear and accurate are God's descriptions of things in their amazing detail long before it is possible for such description to be understood by those who read. Take, for example, the following: "Thou shalt *ascend* and shalt be *like a cloud* to cover the land, and thy bands and many people with thee" (Ezekiel 38:9).

Knowing what we now know of modern war methods, we begin to understand the literal meaning of what for centuries has been thought to be figurative language. Words such as *blitz* and *para-troops* begin to unlock things.

C. The Eastern Nations are to awaken.

The Japanese invasion of China did not crush the sleeping giant; rather, it served to arouse and awaken him. Other influences are at work which cannot even be calculated. An awakened China, stirred by Japan, armed by the allied nations, then dominated by Bolshevistic influences, could be a formidable host. Then what of India? Should the East unite, what a power it would become!

The book of the Revelation is thought by some to give us a prophetic picture of this, as the reading of two interesting passages will show:

"And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates. And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men. And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand; and I heard the number of them. And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone. By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths. For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt. And the

rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk: Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts" (Revelation 9:13-21).

"And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates: and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared" (Revelation 16:12).

Concerning this prophecy, one commentator has said:

"It is hard to say whether the writer aims at describing an army of demons or whether he is only heightening hyperbolically the terrors of an overwhelming army of men; probably he looked for judgment to come through human instruments and through demonic hosts; the features of each become for him interchangeable."

It would seem to us that only a twofold interpretation here would meet the case. What a host it will be—destined in numbers, appearance and equipment to strike terror into its foes!

The river Euphrates was the eastern limit of the Roman Empire and thus became the barrier between East and West. Is it possible that this awful power which the four *angels* or *kings* are here seen to liberate may portray the Asiatic hordes? The number is said to be "two hundred thousand thousand," or two hundred million horsemen.

We realize, of course, that at first sight this figure as a literal number appears to be utterly absurd, but on more mature thought it may not be so

impossible after all. Think for a moment of the population of the Asiatic races as we know it, and let it never be forgotten that our knowledge as to the numbers is very incomplete. What has been called "the yellow peril" is far from being an empty expression. If the Oriental giant really gets into his stride, the world will do well to take heed.

For this poor, sinning world there are greater shocks yet to come. There is more sorrow close at hand.

Concerning the Church of God

As the end time becomes more apparent, the destiny of the Church is being more clearly realized. Within Divinely illuminated souls the hope is not that the Church will win the world, but rather, having completed her Divinely ordained witness in the world, she will be translated out of it before the final wreck takes place.

The Church has never belonged to the world and consequently has never been at home in it. Like her Divine Lord, she is the antagonist of its evil, she does not share its aims and ideas, neither does she look to it for any vital contribution to her life. Having her origin in God, it is to Him she looks for her supplies and to Him she expects to go as her abiding home. While in the world she stands before it as a people separated, suffering, and waiting for her returning Lord.

Having said this, however, it again becomes necessary to call attention to the vital distinction between the *Church* and the *churches*. Of the churches a very different story must be told. Many of these, having become part of the world system, will be involved in the world crash. What could be more

descriptive of much in present-day Christendom than the advance portraiture so clearly given by Divine inspiration almost nineteen hundred years ago?

"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron" (I Timothy 4:1, 2).

"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables" (II Timothy 4:3, 4).

What an amazing conglomeration is offered to the world today in the name of Christ and His Gospel. Is there any wonder that thinking men are not interested? In one place they find a *formalism* cold as ice, hard as rock, and dry as dust, while elsewhere they find a *modernism* which repudiates the inspiration of the Sacred Book, denies the fact of God manifest in flesh, ridicules the atoning Blood, and sneers at the possibility of assured salvation. Combined with all this is an undisguised worldliness and sometimes even open sin.

Here, then, is the shell—the hollow shell—which will surely go down in the wreck, while the true Church, caught away into the realms of light, will shine with her glorified Lord.

"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together

with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (I Thessalonians 4:16, 17).

It is this—the next outstanding event—for which the true Church now looks and longs.

THE DAY OF WRATH
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By
HARRY E. JESSOP, D.D.

VI
TO WHAT WILL ALL THIS LEAD?

THE age in which we live is governed by strange underlying purposes, both satanic and Divine. These are not always apparent on the surface, yet they are to be found working themselves out with an unfailing persistency toward a determined end.

The center of earth interest in this end-time period is the land of Palestine, and in this it is evident that heaven, earth, and hell are vitally concerned. The Divine purpose, as history has already registered, has been and still is, the liberation of the land. This has been apparent since the first section of the World War, 1914-1918. At the time the conflict began, not even the keenest mind suspected that Palestine was involved, for on the battlefields of Belgium and France the Allied nations and the Central Powers were locked in a grim death struggle on which the eyes of the world were turned. During all this, however, unnoticed by the world at large, an inconspicuous little column was pushing its way elsewhere, and one day, almost out of a clear sky, the world was startled by the announcement that General Allenby's army had reached and occupied Jerusalem, having taken possession without the firing of a shot. The Turks, who for centuries had trodden down the land, had become stricken with a strange panic, and with all possible speed had made their escape.

From that moment, the tide of battle in Europe turned in favor of the Allies, and soon the Central Powers were asking for an armistice. The now famous Balfour Declaration also was made and ultimately came the British Mandate of Palestine and the beginning of the return of the Jewish people to their national homeland.

Since that time, the development of the land has proceeded. Cities have been built; vineyards, orchards and oliveyards have been planted. Surely we have here at least the beginning of the fulfilment of those plain statements of the Divine Word which so clearly depict these days. May it not be that, having seen the beginning of Palestine's liberation, and the people to whom centuries ago it was Divinely deeded now being awakened to repossess it, the period which our Lord designated *The Times of the Gentiles* may be considered as well-nigh through? Surely the time is up; the Gentile lease is finished, and the end is in sight.

But that is not all: less than three decades later we find another war in progress, which every day assumes wider proportions. Again, its beginnings have no apparent relation to Palestine. This time the avowed purpose of Britain, America, and their allies is to defeat the totalitarian Powers, while, in turn, the totalitarians insist that they are fighting to end the capitalistic regime. One of the surprises of this present conflict is the uncertain status of the combatant nations. Since the war began, the switches made have been interesting indeed. One has to keep in constant touch with events to be able to say who is fighting whom, where, and for what. The Nazis began with an amazing onward sweep that left the world gasping. Country after country was subdued—and with what purpose? As in the first section of this world conflict, 1914-1918, the Divine objective was the liberation of Palestine, may it not be that this later part now in progress is at least a prelude to the formation of that *Northern Confederacy* of which we have already spoken?

Secretly, all nations have their eyes on Palestine and its people. The *land*, as later we shall show, has mineral and oil resources which the nations ardently covet, while the *people*, whose representatives have been scattered the world over, control much of the capital which the warring nations so badly need.

That the grand objective of the Axis Powers is Palestine may soon be more clearly revealed. Before the full force of the blow falls there, other details must and doubtless will fill themselves into the picture. There must be some very definite switches, and in all probability there will be a temporary lull. Italy and Germany cannot permanently remain allies, neither can Germany and Russia remain antagonists. The ultimate splits which will resolve then, with their respective confederates, into contending camps will all go to prepare the way for the final clash, the great battle of Armageddon. The Nazi regime is the sworn enemy of Jewry. The Russian overlords have no love for these persecuted people. What would be a more clever move than that some Roman leader, whoever he then may be, should reverse his attitude toward the Jewish people, offering them a pact of assistance and thereby securing both their good will and their financial aid? When that pact is offered, let the Jewish people beware and let the world also take heed. It will be a covenant of seven years' duration and the making of that covenant will betoken the presence of Antichrist (Dan. 9:27).

This man of avowed good will, we shall see, will be utterly insincere, having no intention of keeping faith with the Jewish people. His covenant will not stand, and out of it will issue the world's supreme sorrow, the Great Tribulation; but more of that in a later section.

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PART II
ANTICHRIST IS COMING

"That man of sin . . . the son of perdition who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God or is worshipped."—II THESSALONIANS 2:3, 4.

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VII
WANTED—A SUPERMAN!

"If another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive."—JOHN 5:43.

WITHOUT doubt, Antichrist is coming, and when he appears, he will be the culmination of centuries of satanic preparation and human expectancy. The world awaits a superman—its evolutionary philosophy demands this. Since that fantastic protoplasmic era predicated by the worldly wise among us as the source of human beginnings, mankind, it is declared, has travelled far. On the way up man has produced some splendid specimens, but each has been limited, in measure, by the age and circumstances under which he has appeared. These *world saviors*—differing in number according to the viewpoint of those who enumerate them—are extolled and commended; but the race, progressive as it is declared to be, has not yet produced its best.

Then, too, the numerous religious cults about us are vocal with expectancy. According to many, a new Messiah is on the way. Some precocious individuals have gone so far as to announce themselves to be that august personage, but, needless to say, no well-balanced person has ever taken them seriously.

The most disquieting phase of this superman idea in the present day is what might best be stated as the political Messiah complex which certain self-appointed leaders have endeavored to create. Just how far this may yet

be carried only coming days will show, but the actions and utterances of some whose names will immediately occur to the reader have made it clear to a gasping world that they evidently regard themselves as destined by Providence—or shall we say by Fate?—for more than the average man would be inclined to attempt.

Whether these men will multiply, unite, or attempt to liquidate each other is a matter of interest for world observation. To the Christian believing his Bible there is only one answer. He whom we call Lord has plainly declared that one day a seeming superman will appear, and presenting himself, will find a gullible humanity eagerly awaiting him.

Said He, "I came in my Father's name, and ye received me not; if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive" (John 5:43).

The time is at hand. The usurper is not far away. The way for his appearing has been well prepared. Ere long he will be revealed. Let the reader take heed lest he be deceived.

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VIII
COUNTERFEITS

THE coming superman is to be the supreme masterpiece of Satan—a counterfeit of the most precious treasure either heaven or earth has ever known.

A counterfeit is a clever imitation of a real and worth-while thing, produced with the direct intent to deceive. Concerning counterfeits, two things may safely be said:

First, of course, it would not be possible to counterfeit something which did not exist. If not already in existence at least as an idea, a counterfeit could not possibly be made of it; that which was made, being the original, would be the real thing.

Then, too, it would not be probable that anyone would desire to counterfeit anything which would not be of value. Why spend time imitating a thing which no one would want? Consequently, we find faked diamonds, but who has ever suggested a faked brick-bat? We hear of faked paintings, but who would go to the trouble of endeavoring to persuade a skeptical public of the genuineness or otherwise of a whitewashed wall? We hear of counterfeit notes, bills, coins, and the like, and immediately conclude that behind these are real things which they imitate and issue without proper authority. No sane forger would attempt to make an English nine-penny piece or a nineteen-

shilling note, neither would he attempt to gull the American public with a seventy-two cent piece or a three-and-a-quarter-dollar bill. The reason is obvious, namely, that these things do not exist and never have been authorized; therefore, their spurious character would be immediately detected.

Martin Luther is said to have designated Satan "The Ape of God," insisting that whatever good thing God has made, the devil has sought to imitate. There are hints of this in the Bible and indications in the events around us. We give in passing just a few of these, which reveal—

God's Originals and Satan's Shams

God has His *good seed*—Satan has his *tares* (Matthew 13).

God has a *true Vine*—Satan a *degenerate plant* (John 15; Jeremiah 2).

God has a *Bride*—Satan a *harlot* (Revelation 18, 19).

God has a city, *New Jerusalem*—Satan a city, *Babylon* (Revelation 21:18).

These are merely passing hints. A fuller study of these contrasts will reveal many more, and will prove worth while to any student of the Word of God.

The present religious situation approached from this viewpoint is both interesting and instructive. Nay, more, such an approach will immediately reveal to the Divinely enlightened soul the subtleties by which today Satan is deceiving unwary souls. Every great truth which God has revealed, in which is found some privileged possession for His trusting people, has been stolen and counterfeited by the powers of darkness and turned into a spiritual snare.

Continuing our suggestion of the false and true—God's originals and Satan's shams—we suggest, in passing, some present-day *originals* and *counterfeits*, again merely opening the door for a glimpse into what will offer a wide field of study which will glow with interest.

The Kingdom of God has current coinage of spiritual truth which the devil has stolen and imitated. The Church has two classes of foes—those who *contend* and those who *pretend*, and of the two, the latter are the most to be feared. When enemies are blatant, belligerent, and determined in their attitude, there is at least the satisfaction of knowing where they stand. But when they pretend to be friends and are nothing more than masquerading foes they are a menace indeed.

The New Birth is Counterfeited in Theosophy

What more vital word was ever spoken than when in that solemn moment our Divine Master looked into the face of that evidently puzzled religious leader of His day and plainly declared, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3)? It is one of the foundational doctrines of the Christian Church.

That great spiritual fact of rebirth has been stolen, twisted, and linked with the old Hindu teaching of soul transmigration, in which a series of successive births is predicated, until the final perfection of the ego has been attained. Such attainment is declared to account for Buddha, Mohammed, Jesus, and "other saviors of humanity." To these "other saviors" there has been recently added by the audacious "I am Presence" cult, a new personality, *Saint Germain*, whoever he may be.

*The Second Coming of Christ
Is Counterfeited in Russellism*

Other dangerous errors are wrapped up as traps for the unsuspecting in this teaching, among them being:

- a. The subtle poison belittling the person of Christ.
- b. The teaching concerning His non-bodily resurrection.
- c. The teaching concerning the sinner's second chance of salvation in the life beyond.

Our immediate concern, however, is with that subtle Second Advent counterfeit popularized by the slogan: "*Millions now living will never die.*"

How attractive that is. How Scriptural it sounds. Did not our Lord Himself say, "I will come again and receive you unto myself" (John 14:3)? And is it not written that to the wondering Olivet crowd on that Ascension day the white-robed messengers declared: "This same Jesus . . . shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11)?

Did not Saint Paul declare, "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (I Thess. 4:16, 17)?

"Oh, yes," say these subtle vendors of error, "we believe in the Second Coming of Christ. He came secretly to the world in the year 1874, and He has been here ever since."

According to this teaching, we are in the Millennium now. It will hardly require an expert Bible scholar to detect the spurious nature of coinage such as this, and surely none of the war-stricken countries of the world are likely to believe it.

Communion with God Is Counterfeited in Spiritism

It will be noted that we do not use the word "Spiritualism," for we have never felt satisfied to honor this cult by that name. It is *spiritual* only in that it deals with *spiritual forces*, but for those whose minds are illuminated by the Holy Ghost it is not difficult to see that those forces are not the kind which we as believers predicate when we use such a term. The Word of God gives us no indication of possible communication with departed friends before our Lord Himself appears in the air to catch away His waiting saints. Then "them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him" (I Thess. 4:13-18).

Again and again we are warned in the inspired Word against those who would seek to consult with the dead, and those who have familiar spirits. The spirit of man yearns for communion, and God offers him a heart-to-heart fellowship. Here Satan steps in and offers a faked communion with departed friends. It is a cruel delusion, in that our dear ones are evidently personified by demons.

Divine Healing Is Counterfeited in Christian Science

Sin and disease, says this audacious cult, are merely a human delusion. Cease to recognize them and they will disappear.

Sin and disease, says the Word of God, are a tragic reality in the history of the human race, and are dealt with only in the atoning death of God's incarnate Son. Negatives are not enough here. Sin must be recognized, confessed, and purged out, while pain is too real a fact to ignore.

There is one uniting fact about all these errors—they lack *the blood streak*. In a post office we stood at the cashier's window. His attitude was courteous but very cautious. Taking each currency note as we handed it to him, he eyed it with critical scrutiny. Then looking up in a half apologetic manner, he said, "We are compelled to be careful; there are so many bad ones about. But we know the right ones by their marks."

"But what are the marks?" we ventured to inquire. "Well," he replied, "they are various, and some, of course, we are not permitted to divulge, but you are always safe in looking for this—wrought into the very texture there is a reddish hue." In all these counterfeits it will be noticed that the *reddish hue* is lacking. They have no atoning blood. Not one of Satan's modern *isms* acknowledges the saving virtue of the blood of Jesus. There are other marks besides, of course, but this is *the final test*.

Can it be that these *isms* answer in our day to the "citizens" of the "Far Country"? It was to one of these, the reader will remember, that the prodigal "went and joined himself" when, having left his father's house, "he began to be in want."

The cults of which we speak are now so well established that they have their second generation adherents, children born to parents who have already accepted such teaching and are therefore brought up with no other knowledge of religion. It has not been uncommon for us, however, when entering into conversation with those who have personally *joined* one of the cults, to ask

this question, "Did you know anything about religion before this?" And almost invariably—in fact, we do not at the moment remember a single exception—the answer has been, "Oh, yes, I was a Methodist [or substitute any denomination you wish], but . . ." The tragedy of it is that these cults do not draw their adherents from the fields of sin but from the Houses of Prayer. Usually it is a case of rejected light, then spiritual darkness and deception.

Already the mind of the alert reader will be at work adding to these "*isms*" and also thinking of what we might here term *border-line errors*. These carry the "*reddish hue*," for they sincerely honor the blood, and within there are many dear children of God. Yet somewhere they have allowed extravagances to accrue, and while their adherents still enjoy a positive salvation, they are more heavily loaded along the danger line than they are aware.

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IX
THE FINAL COUNTERFEIT DESCRIBED

The Lesser Will Lead to the Greater

IF it be true that the Adversary has shown such amazing diligence in producing imitations in these lesser things, it should not surprise us to learn of something far more subtle which might lie farther ahead.

It is easy to see that so clever a forger may not yet have uttered his final counterfeit, but fortunately for those who walk in the light of God and are acquainted with the teachings of His Word, we are not left in ignorance as to what such a counterfeit is to be.

According to the plain statements of Scripture, the world has yet to see a deliberate and daring incarnation of Satan himself within a human personality—a brazen, unblushing imitation of the incarnation of the Son of God.

Satan has always hated the thought of God manifest in the flesh and has resorted to all the diabolical measures that hell could command to combat it. When the fact of the Messiah's birth was first made known, he stirred up the jealousy of a bloodthirsty king and innocent children were slaughtered in the hope that the Godchild might be among them. Throughout the Savior's earth life Satan dogged His footsteps, meeting Him in wilderness combat, entering

into the heart of a chosen disciple for the purpose of betraying Him, antagonizing Him in Gethsemane's garden, hounding Him to the cross, and finally gloating over a sealed and guarded tomb.

Satan's hatred for Jesus goes far back beyond "the days of his flesh"; in fact, it reaches back beyond the beginning of our world. It would seem that it was his jealousy here that occasioned the introduction of sin into the universe even before it touched our world at all. Let us see what can be discovered about it.

Two Old Testament passages will help us in our inquiry, although even here only meager information is obtainable concerning these pre-creation events, and that more by passing hint and suggestion than by direct word. These two passages, however, are at least sufficient to enable us to locate Satan as to his identity and original position. They shed light on his declared attitude toward Jesus and give glimpses into the depths of a spiritual drama, the extent of which only eternity itself will reveal. They read as follows:

"How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High" (Isaiah 14:12-14).

"Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the

jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created. Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee. By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee. Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffick; therefore will I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee. All they that know thee among the people shall be astonished at thee: thou shalt be a terror, and never shalt thou be any more" (Ezekiel 28:11-19).

Here it will be recognized that the prophets are dealing with a being of no ordinary quality. Only one personage will fit the picture—Satan himself. The Isaiah passage gives us his early name and title. He was "Lucifer, son of the morning," or "Lucifer, the day star." His fall is also seen, and the cause of it. Two words will describe it, namely, *self-exaltation*.

In Lucifer's *I will* we are evidently contacting the first elements of sin as known to our universe. Just *when* this happened we are not told. It was evidently far back in the eternities, before the creation of man and before the present condition of the world.

The "I," out of its adjustment, became the vehicle of sin, and there at once is the root of sin—the ego out of adjustment Godward.

It is interesting to note that in this *ego twist* which the three short verses record are seven capital "I's." That "I," magnified and twisted, became the center of sin. "How art thou fallen . . . , O Lucifer . . . For thou hast said in thine heart, I . . ."

The Ezekiel passage, evidently dealing with the same personage, omits his name but gives us his rank. "Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth . . ." (verse 14). Further, it is said, "Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee." It will also be noted that he is associated with "Eden, the garden of God" (verse 13). But of that we shall see more later. This is the being who is later recorded as offering to give Jesus "all the kingdoms of the world" in return for an act of worship (Matt. 4:8, 9). Paul calls him "the god of this world" (II Cor. 4:4) and "The prince of the power of the air" (Eph. 2:2).

What then is the relationship between these two mighty, majestic beings, Lucifer, son of the morning, and Jesus, the only begotten Son of the Father, and why their very manifest antagonism? It would appear that there had been some earlier association. Such amazing enmity as that manifested by the fallen Lucifer throughout the entire lifetime of Jesus could hardly have been without a clearly defined cause. Let us compare the information which has been given us concerning the two.

Of the Son of God it is written:

"His dear Son . . . who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: for by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that

are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist That in all things he might have the pre-eminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell" (Colossians 1:13-19).

"His Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, . . . being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son . . . ? And again, when he bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him" (Hebrews 1:2-6).

Concerning the "Son of the morning," we are told four outstanding things. These we shall find as we turn again to Isaiah 14:12-14 and Ezekiel 28:11-19 for reference.

- a. He is a created being—therefore in rank and nature of a lower order than the Son of God.
- b. He was "the anointed cherub that covereth . . ."—probably in rank, power and authority next to the Son of God Himself.
- c. He was perfect from the day of his creation "until iniquity was found in him."
- d. That "iniquity" was evidently the jealousy of an exalted ego, prompted by the position and splendor of one whom he deemed a rival, doubtless the Son of God.

Hear him in his unholy soliloquy. "*I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds. I will be like the most High.*"

According to this passage, these things were *not uttered* by Lucifer, they were just *inwardly cherished*. "Thou hast said *in thine heart . . .*" One seditious thought in the holiest cherub is sufficient to damn him. "Thou art fallen . . ."

It seems reasonable to conclude that Lucifer himself had a "*throne*." I will exalt *my throne . . .*" The question immediately arises, Where was that throne located? and the answer seems to be, On this planet.

Here we are facing the theory of a pre-Adamic creation, which may be stated briefly as follows: "*In the beginning* God created the heaven and the earth" (Gen. 1:1). Just when that *beginning* was, no one knows. "And the earth was without form [R.V., waste] and void" (v. 2).

Then surely it would seem that *after* that creative fact something happened, and that this happening was a catastrophe of amazing magnitude. A passage from Isaiah's prophecy will illuminate this: "For thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it: he hath established it, he created it not a waste, he formed it *to be inhabited*" (Isa. 45:18, R.V.).

To be inhabited by whom? Probably by a race of beings of whom we have no account. Probably by "the angels," of whom it is written that they "kept not their first estate" (R.V., principality) (Jude 6). The period predicated by this theory as lying between verses one and two in the first chapter of Genesis

is of undeterminable length, probably millions of years. If this is so, it could account for the great age of the earth as predicated by some scientists. It would also account for the various "ages" of which scholars say so much in these days. This prehistoric catastrophe did not *destroy* Lucifer, although Jesus declared that He had seen him "fall from heaven" (Luke 10:18). We meet him again in Eden, as later we shall see—but wait: first, we must consider some Bible portraitures of this superman which he is to create.

The Counterfeit as Seen by Daniel

There can be no doubt that Daniel saw this personage and declared him. He called him *the little horn* and described him as *coming up* on the head of the fourth beast emerging out of the Great Sea (Dan. 7:8).

Passing on to the eighth chapter of Daniel's prophecy, we meet in verse 23 "a king of fierce countenance," fulfilled in measure by Antiochus Epiphanes (B.C. 175) but having a more complete fulfilment in the yet future *Man of Sin*.

Again, he is seen in chapter nine, verse twenty-six under the designation, "the prince that shall come." He is to be the ruling power of the nation which "shall destroy the city and the sanctuary." It is an established fact of history that the people who destroyed the city and the sanctuary (A.D. 70) were the Romans. May we not therefore reasonably conclude that this amazing personality will make his appearance somewhere within the Roman Empire?

The Counterfeit as Seen by John

John, like Daniel, was pre-eminently a seer, and with true spiritual penetration he discerned this same dark character, giving him five distinct and different names.

He is called Antichrist. This is John's favorite expression designating the entire system of evil as opposed to Christ, as the following passages in his epistles will show. The reader will do well to read and carefully ponder them: I John 2:18-22; 4:3; II John 7.

In Johannine thought Antichrist is both a *tendency* and a *person*, the one heading up to and culminating in the other. There is a further indication that the *final personality* is to be preceded by others of a lesser caliber but of a similar type who will distinctly foreshadow him, while the entire age will be permeated with the spirit which will ultimately produce him. In other words, just as by types, prophecy, and created expectancy God prepared the world for the coming of Christ, so in his own subtle manner has Satan assumed the role of imitator and is preparing the world for his final piece of trickery—the coming Antichrist.

As the time draws nearer, the signs increase. What an amazing crop of dictators the world has seen within recent years. Can all this be mere coincidence? We think not, especially when viewed in the light of the signs of the times. It would seem to us to be an evidence of direct satanic working according to prearranged plan. May it not be an effort on the part of the powers of darkness to familiarize the world with the idea of dictatorship and thus prepare the public mind for the great arch dictator yet to come?

He is called The Liar. John's peculiar emphasis here does not appear in our King James Version, which reads: "Who is *a liar* but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist . . ." (I John 2:22).

On the surface the statement is true and to the casual reader would hardly seem to require amendment. The revisers, however, have seen the need of strengthening the declaration, and have made it to read: "Who is THE LIAR . . . ?" The world has had many liars, and doubtless will have many more, but this embodiment of evil is to exceed them all. He is to be the consummation of all falsehood and deceit.

He is called The Denier. He is referred to as "he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ . . . that denieth the Father and the Son" (I John 2:22).

He is called The Deceiver. Here again the revisers have given us a clearer picture, "This is THE DECEIVER and THE ANTICHRIST" (II John 7).

He is called The Beast. This is John's descriptive name for Antichrist in the Apocalypse. He is to be found in the latter part of the book, and is to be carefully distinguished from the "four beasts," an expression which is better translated "living creatures," found in the earlier chapters. As we develop our study, we shall meet this "beast" description again; it will therefore be well to postpone its consideration until we deal with the full-orbed portraiture of the man.

The Counterfeit as Seen by Paul

Concerning this weird character, Paul has one outstanding passage in which three distinct names are used (II Thess. 2:1-12).

He is called The Man of Sin (v. 3). Here is a strange yet comprehensive expression which might well be written: "The man who is the climax of sin." He is Satan's awful culmination of human sin developed through the centuries.

He is called The Son of Perdition (v. 3). Here we shall do well to note that, speaking of *perdition*, the apostle calls this person "the son." The New Testament has eight references to *perdition* but only in this and one other passage does it speak of its *son*. Speaking of the betrayer Judas Iscariot, Jesus said, "And none of them is lost, but the son of perdition" (John 17:12). Some have gone so far as to suggest an underlying association here, declaring that the betrayer and Antichrist are one. They regard both these personages as incarnations of the same spirit from the underworld—Satan himself: one incarnation having taken place at the beginning of the age for the purpose of betrayal and the other yet to take place at its close for the final antagonism.

He is called That Wicked (v. 8). This the revisers have translated, "That lawless one."

Underlying these three designations is a wealth of suggestiveness, with which we cannot here pause to deal, but which the spiritually enlightened believer will now begin to comprehend.

The Composite Picture

All these Scripture writers join to present a composite portraiture of the final counterfeit. Place their descriptions side by side and what do we find? Without doubt, a personality who is to be both a mystery and a menace to the entire world. He will be *unnatural* because *supernatural*, yet his powers are to have their origin not in the world Creator but in its usurper.

Among others, seven marks will characterize him:

He will be the culmination of the world's long tendency to rebellion.

He will be the sum total of the world's sin.

He will be the embodiment of the world's lawlessness.

He will be the climax of deceit and lies.

He will be the antagonist of Jesus Christ and the aspirant after Divine worship.

He will be the direct incarnation of hell.

He will be the object which a Christ-rejecting and God-defying humanity will welcome and adore, only to find when altogether too late that by him they have been gulled, fooled and damned.

"Yet a little while," said Jesus, "is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light lest darkness come upon you; for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. While ye have the light, believe in the light that ye may be the children of the light" (John 12:35, 36).

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X
**THE TRAIL ALONG WHICH THIS
PERSONALITY IS DEVELOPED**

How the Trail Is Entered

THE personage with whom we are now concerned comes, of necessity, along a long line of development. Distinctive elements are required to produce him and a distinctive atmosphere will be needed to manifest him. The trail along which he is developed is easily traceable. We shall find it necessary to go far back to discover its elements and to push farther forward if we are to visualize its final environment, but for both these the Word of God is sufficient and will furnish all that we require. The trail begins with *the sin of man* and ends with the *Man of Sin*.

The story begins with man's earliest history, and for its early detail we must turn to the book of Genesis. The book, as its name indicates, is the book of *beginnings*, and from this viewpoint alone becomes an intensely interesting study. In it, at least twenty *beginnings* are seen. Doubtless others are to be found and may be added by the reader.

Here, then, in its early chapters are to be found the opening traces of facts and forces which we contact today, and among them we strike the beginning of the *sin trail*, which ultimately brings to society this *mystery*, this *monster*,

this *monstrosity*, who is now the center of our thinking. Let us open our Bibles at the third chapter.

"*Now the serpent . . .*" For the moment we must pause there. That is our starting point, and an exceedingly suggestive one too. This serpent and his tactics embody two outstanding thoughts, both of which develop through the succeeding ages until they find their full fruition and complete expression in the "Man of Sin."

Sin is seen in its deceptive fascination. This is indicated in the *instrument* used.

"Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field." The creature here introduced is evidently intended to suggest qualities quite distinct from those which we now know in the serpent, for the entire setting makes it far from the repulsive snake which the word would indicate to the modern mind. The *serpent cursed* is a loathsome creature, scorned, feared and shunned, but the *serpent as created* presents an entirely different figure, an object of beauty, attractiveness, and grace. There is reason to believe that before the curse was pronounced upon it, the serpent was the most beautiful creature in the world.

It was through this creature of shining beauty that Satan commenced his work, and it will be through a channel equally attractive that he will complete it. It was from this beginning of shining beauty that the sin trail grew in its seductiveness, until Paul was led to express the concern "lest . . . as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted" (II Cor. 11:3). He further warned his readers that "Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light" (II Cor. 11:14).

The seer of Patmos recognized the fascinating element when reporting the manifested Antichrist, and wrote, "And all the world wondered after the beast" (Rev. 13:3).

Sin is seen in its spirit of rebellion. This is indicated in the *method* employed.

"And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said . . . ? Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day that ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil" (Gen. 3:1-5).

"Ye shall be as gods" (as God, R.V.). Here was the bait—and the poor deluded pair swallowed it at a gulp. Here in Satan's first recorded temptation of man is a reflex of Lucifer's own ambitions. "I will be like the most High" (Isa. 14:14). To be "as gods"! Has not this been the craving of a God-defying humanity ever since? Here at last is the finished product, the fully developed result:

"That man of sin . . . the son of perdition; who opposeth . . . himself *above all that is called God*, or is worshipped; *so that as God* he sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that *he is God*."

In that moment of yielding in Eden, two things simultaneously happened, or, shall we say? a double tragedy occurred. It was a tragedy of *annihilation*, for something was lost—something which man could not afford to be without. He lost his contact God-ward, without which he died. It was also the tragedy of *acquisition*. Something entered into human nature which it could not afford to possess. That something was *sin*. The entire nature of man was corrupted. He therefore started on his age-long journey with his life stream poisoned at the source.

How the Trail Is Developed

The development of the *sin trail* is the outworking of the centuries. It is a spirit, a tendency, a proclivity, inherited by Adam's offspring and perpetuated through the years. It has permeated his nature and poisoned the very atmosphere in which he lives. It has been manifested in lawlessness, defiance, and rebellion against God. It is reflected also in men's attitude the one toward the other.

This was immediately seen in Adam's first child. Listen to Eve's cry of rapturous delight, the ecstasy of the world's first mother as she gazes into the face of her babe newly born: "And she conceived and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the Lord" (Gen. 4:1).

It has been stated that a more correct rendering here would be "I have gotten a man, the Lord," or, more literally, "I have gotten a man Jehovah." "*A man Jehovah*"! Can it be that with her first conception Mother Eve cherished the expectation that she who had been the foolish tool of Satan to throw a world into sin was now to become the Messiah bearer who at the gates of a lost Eden would restore it? Within her soul still rang those words of promise so recently given by the lips of God Himself. One was to be born of woman, her very seed, who would bruise the serpent's head, even though the serpent bruised his heel (Gen. 3:15). Alas for her high hopes if this was the case, for her son was by no means a savior of others by his own blood, but a murderer, staining his hands with the blood of his brother.

This man with the blood-red hands went out and built a city—the first city the world ever knew (Gen. 4:16, 17).

Thus, we see the very foundation of our boasted civilization laid by a murderer's hand. Is there any wonder therefore that so much blood has been shed to maintain it? Or does it surprise us when we are Divinely foretold that it will be in an awful welter of human blood that it will end?

"Blood . . . even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs"—about two hundred miles (Rev. 14:20).

This corruption was quickly seen in the entire race. Life has a natural law which we moderns have learned to designate *the law of heredity*. When stripped of all the intricacies which scholars have woven around it, it is simply a more scholarly way of saying that *like produces like*, or that in our race perpetuation man simply reproduces what he is. It is the outflow of race life in individual containers.

Man's inherent corruption was soon manifest, both in individuals and in society at large. Genesis 6:1-7 will show this. The result was the outpouring of Divine judgment, as seen in the flood.

With the eight persons who survived that catastrophe God took up His work of race building once again, but the old spirit of rebellion soon manifested itself even in the new society. Soon came Babel's tower builders expressing their defiance and drawing upon themselves the inevitable confusion (Gen. 11:1-9). "A flood?" said they. "Never again! Judgment? We will beat Jehovah at His own business. We will dig ourselves in, and build ourselves around and go up so high that in case of threatened judgment we may escape upward."

That all this was crude, we are aware, but we venture to suggest that since that day ages professedly far more sophisticated have had little more to show

for their vaunted superior wisdom. It has been only a matter of their method of expression. In principle we are no better than they.

From those early days onward there has developed within the race a perpetual antagonism toward God and Divine things.

This has not always manifested itself in the same outward manner. Sometimes it has been strongly belligerent and sometimes exceedingly subtle. The true character of the world spirit is seen however in *the treatment it has meted out to the messengers of God*. Prophets have been rejected and slain. Our Lord accused the men of His own generation of building the tombs of the prophets and verbally condemning the generation that slew them, while they themselves cherished the same hatred within their hearts (Matt. 23:27-29).

This world disposition is seen further in *the malice exhibited toward the Son of God*. Here the story of the wicked husbandmen will suffice (Matt. 21:33-41). The fact of Calvary after three years' tender ministry is the classical answer to all the vain suggestions about an improving world.

"And those kind hands that did such good
They nailed them to a cross of wood."

The world that crucified God's Son has *the same bitter enmity at heart toward His people*. It is not always manifest. It is not always realized. Sometimes there is not enough spiritual energy within the Church to arouse it, as the following story will illustrate:

We know a friend who as a camp-meeting speaker had the following experience: On retiring to rest after the first night's meeting he became conscious of the presence of a hard substance in the bed beneath him. He did

his best to straighten it out, but to no avail, and, finally, despite the inconvenience, he fell asleep. As the hours wore on the *lump* began to move. Evidently the warmth of the sleeper's body had in some way affected it. This gratified him somewhat, but the morning's examination revealed that the lump on which he had been sleeping was a great black snake. Unknown to everybody, it had gotten into the bed, and was alive. All that was needed was the requisite amount of heat to make it move.

In this our day the Church and the world have drawn very close together, but, much as we would like to believe it, we cannot find any ground for believing that in the world itself there has been any radical, fundamental change. One of the well-worn phrases used by those old-fashioned Methodist fathers was, "The world is no friend to grace." That phrase needs to be revived.

John's exhortation is illuminating:

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, the pride of life, is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever" (I John 2:15-17).

Concerning this world, John again declares: "The whole world lieth *in wickedness*," or, better, "in the arms of the wicked one" (I John 5:19).

John, moreover, does not hesitate to identify this present world system with the system of Antichrist, and to insist that its very spirit will foster him and ultimately manifest him.

Where the Trail Ends

It now becomes a very short step to the fact of Antichrist. The first act of sin gave birth to the spirit and tendency of Antichrist; the tendency developed the corrupt world system; and the world system is to produce the person, an incarnate devil, the sum total of the developed wickedness of the age.

This is humanity's heritage from Adam, yet not wholly due to Adam, for the seed of his transgression has been nurtured and fostered by the deliberate endorsement of every man.

Now, therefore, whether applied to a world, a nation or an individual, this word of God is certainly true:

"They have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind" (Hosea 8:7).

"They that plow iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same" (Job 4:8).

"Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting" (Galatians 6:7, 8).

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XI
THE FULLY DEVELOPED BACKGROUND
AGAINST WHICH THE COUNTERFEIT IS SEEN

Thermometer—Not Calendar

FOR the coming of Antichrist no date is given. The period at which he is to appear seems to be governed by the *thermometer* rather than by the *calendar*. Its most important element is not *time* but *temperature*. It is to be the fullest development of that tendency that has deepened through the ages, and is designated by Paul "the mystery of iniquity" (II Thess. 2:7).

This "mystery of iniquity" has hitherto been held in check by another power designated thus: "Only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way" (II Thess. 2:7).

Here we must pause to check up on our phraseology or it may be that we shall find ourselves tripped by what at first seemed to be most familiar words.

The difficulty lies with those harmless looking expressions, *letteth* and *let*. It is the old English word for *hinder* or *prevent*. The English revised version has translated it "*restrain*."

The thought behind the passage is that of a secretly controlling hand holding the brake and checking the speed.

Surely that was never more fully manifest than at the present time. What has held back both England and America from blood-red revolution during recent years? Certainly only a mysterious, nay, miraculous something, or, better, Some ONE, whom minds without Divine illumination find difficult to explain.

Who or what, then, is this mysterious *restrainer*? Only one answer is adequate. The restrainer is the Holy Spirit within the Church. Against His restraint, however, the tide of evil has been slowly but surely rising. Now it would seem that flood tide is being reached. Against any resisting power the restless forces of evil are hurling themselves like torrents against an obstructing dam. Meanwhile, the master mind of Satan is at work preparing his schemes in readiness for the coming day.

The Increasing Power of Evil in Its Fourfold Tendency

We say *fourfold tendency* rather than suggest *four distinct tendencies*, because of the necessity of recognizing the essential underlying affinity. They may be regarded as four contributing forces to the one powerful current. They are distinctive elements, yet part of a general stream.

There is the *social expression*—the satanic moulding of general conditions toward an unholy but desired end.

We are not left in any degree of doubt as to how society will have deteriorated in the end time to enable the powers of evil to execute their unholy schemes.

Concerning Character and Conduct

We are warned that "in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God. Having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof" (II Tim. 3:1-5).

Concerning Revolutionary Tendencies

Our Lord Himself, Seer as well as Savior, declared that "upon the earth" there would be "distress of nations, with perplexity . . . men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth" (Luke 21:25, 26).

James also gives us a forward look wherein he prophetically addresses the offending capitalistic class, charging them with keeping back wages by fraud, but declaring that the cries of the oppressed are registered in heaven and the coming judgment is sure. (See James 5:1-8.)

Had these things been written as literal history by a contemporary writer they could not have more clearly depicted social conditions as we have them today. They are the Divinely declared happenings amid which Antichrist will be revealed.

There is also the *commercial expression*—that satanic manipulating of business conditions toward a similar end.

The world today is being thickly spread with an amazing network of combines, unions, mergers, amalgamation, and the like. These are not only found in every country, being national, but with international complications they interlock themselves in world-wide reach and power.

This world-wide commercial readiness awaits the coming Master hand.

There is further the *political expression*—that satanic directing of world events into desired channels.

This is a day of perplexed politicians. They are facing herculean tasks and are consciously not big enough for them. To say this is not to cast reflection on these men. Many of them are honest; they sincerely desire to do the honorable thing, but, at best, they are limited humans handling a superhuman task. World affairs have gotten out of hand. The job is far too big.

What was the League of Nations but a sincere attempt to make the best of a bad business? Its struggle has been pathetic. All the world now knows that when facing a really serious international situation it was little more than a barking dog without teeth. Italy realized this and in spite of many "protests" and threatened "sanctions" marched into Ethiopia. Japan realized it, and to the accompaniment of "notes" and "warnings" invaded China. Germany saw it and smiled, planting her military machine in Alsace-Lorraine, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Denmark, and other countries. Russia knew it, and launched her campaign with murderous intensity against Finland.

And yet, from another point of view, this League of Nations may not be by any means so ineffective as it seems. May it not be the beginnings of other things which at present only Divinely illuminated eyes can see?

Centuries ago, in picture form, first through the eye of a heathen monarch, and then through the heart of a saint and seer, God gave to the world in twofold form a prophetic forecast of that to which the League was heading. In the second and seventh chapters of the book of Daniel are recorded two parallel visions of Gentile supremacy. In the first the age trends are expressed in terms of its outward grandeur, while in the second is seen the indication of its true inward character; hence, to the king it is an imposing *image* but to the prophet it is a series of *beasts*. Yet, while the visions differ as to the figures employed, there is a general truth content common to both.

(a) *They begin with the indication of a single authority.*

The *image* vision displays "a head of gold" (chapter 2:32, 38), and the *beast* vision, "a lion with eagle's wings" (chapter 7:4). Nebuchadnezzar was absolute as monarch. He was a despot, ruling alone (chapter 2:37, 38).

(b) *They show how the Gentile kingdoms deteriorate as they develop.*

See especially chapter 2:39 and note the word "inferior." In the two visions that developing inferiority is seen:

In the metals employed. Beginning with *gold*, there is a fall to *silver*; then to *brass*; then to *iron*; and finally to a *mixture* of iron and clay.

In the animals described. Beginning with the *lion*, king of the forest, winged with the eagle, king of the air, there is a downward slant to the *bear*, then follows the *leopard*, and finally that

nondescript animal positively hideous with no known parallel anywhere among beasts.

(c) *They indicate not only the fact of deterioration but also the weakness of division.*

The despotic *autocracy* of Babylon gives place to the *bureaucracy* of Medo-Persia, even as the head of gold is followed by the arms and breast of silver and the winged lion by the lopsided bear.

The *bureaucracy* of Medo-Persia is succeeded by the Greek empire, which broke up into *four kingdoms*, even as the lopsided bear is followed by the leopard with four heads.

The *four heads* of Greece is followed by the *Tenfold Confederacy* yet to be established, even as the image ends in the ten toes and the last beast comes up with ten horns.

Soon we shall have completed the ten-horned, ten-toed confederacy, and with it will come the World Emperor.

There is finally *the religious expression*—that satanic influencing of things in realms both moral and spiritual which so blights true spirituality that it declines and dies.

Again, we do no guesswork when making such statements, for God has seen to it that clear indications should be given us in advance, as expressed by Paul in such passages as I Timothy 4:1, 2, and II Timothy 4:3, 4, which we have previously considered.

Thus is Satan working according to plan, and surely none but blinded eyes can fail to see it.

*The Development of the Tendency in Its
Outstanding Characteristics*

A survey of world events since 1914 is not only interesting but arresting, but as this does not come within the scope of our present purpose, we content ourselves with calling attention to three outstanding movements which have manifested themselves in Europe, emphasizing for the moment only one of the three.

Fascism rooted itself in Italy; Nazism established itself in Germany; while Bolshevism centered itself in Russia.

As we approach these systems, it might help us if we remember how easy it is to see the worst in any movement when looking at it through foreign eyes, while there is always something which might be claimed as beneficial from its own point of view.

Italy, as yet at any rate, has not made a direct attack upon religion, but Germany and Russia have already created records concerning which every true Christian among them must surely be heartbroken and ashamed. The most alarming fact, however, is not the local happenings in any of these countries, but rather the subtle world influence which is slowly but surely permeating the masses of humanity at the instigation of Red Russia. Let us beware of wishful thinking here.

Bolshevism is essentially atheistic. The declared purpose of its propaganda is to wipe out the name of God from the earth. This is being accomplished in a twofold manner:

1. *By the founding of a godless state where atheism is supreme.* Concerning this, little need be said by way of amplification, as the fact is now too well known to admit of any dispute.

Lenin himself wrote:

"Religion is one of the forms of that spiritual yoke which has always and everywhere been laid on the masses of people crushed by poverty. Religion is an opiate of the people, a sort of spiritual vodka. The modern worker contemptuously casts off religious prejudices and leaves heaven to the parsons."—*Socialism and Religion*.

Among the Russian leaders no stone has been left unturned to expose to ridicule the things most sacred to the people of God. By sneering comment and by shameful caricature, the campaign has been ruthlessly pursued until the religion for which Jesus died and the martyrs gave their lives has become a laughing stock indeed.

Communism and Christianity are diametrically opposite, and if Communism is to live it must regard the Christian religion as its sworn foe. And this it does, as the following excerpt will show:

"We hate Christians. The best among them must be looked upon as our very worst enemies. They preach love and mercy to one's neighbor. What we intend having is hatred. We must learn how to hate, for only at this price can we conquer the world. We have made an end of the kings of the world, let us

now make an end of the kings of the clouds. All religions are poison. They put the mind to sleep and destroy it, they kill both will power and conscience. War to the knife must be declared against all religions. Our task is the destruction of all religion and all morality." (Ordinance issued by Lunatscharsky, late Bolshevik Commissar for Education.)

In his book, *The Clash of World Forces*, Basil Matthews states, "To join the Communist Party it is essential to renounce all religious belief." We would go further and say, to have any desire to join the Communist Party is to give definite evidence that any religious belief once possessed is no longer of sufficient vitality to need renunciation. Bolshevism is a godless society made up of godless souls. It is the fallen Lucifer's advance portraiture of a more extensive condition yet to come.

2. *By the making of that state into a center for godless world propaganda*, Bolshevism is sworn to world revolution, and will faithfully work at its job. If the Church is slack in her missionary activity, Bolshevism is not. Nor does it neglect the children. It has Sunday schools where unsuspecting minds are poisoned by a subtle propaganda. Some time ago the writer was handed a copy of a Bolshevik Sunday-school "hymnal." In it he found the most blasphemous parodies of well-known Gospel hymns. In each case it was evident at a glance that the basis was the familiar Gospel hymn, but the change was so obvious that it was also evident that the sole purpose of the alteration was to impress upon Bolshevistic youth the idea of ridicule concerning Jesus and things spiritual.

One example will suffice. Our Gospel hymn writer has beautifully expressed it:

"The whole world was lost in the darkness of sin,
The *light* of the world is Jesus."

The Bolshevistic blasphemer has dared to alter this precious hymn of the Church so that it reads as follows:

"The whole world at last is beginning to see
The blight of the world is Jesus.
Like sunshine at noonday, free thought has shown me
The blight of the world is Jesus."

Keep off the blight or blighted you'll be,
Blighted for life by credulity,
Once I believed, but now I can see
The blight of the world is Jesus."

Into every land the emissaries of this brood of darkness are making their way. Their work at first is under cover, financed sometimes one wonders from where. With amazing audacity the most unexpected sources are corrupted and in them the seeds of the rankest atheism are sown. The freedom of the great democracies is taken advantage of and made a medium of devilish propaganda. Universities and colleges are corrupted in their teaching and thousands upon thousands of the brightest minds of the younger generation are sent forth year after year, stripped of any vestige of the faith they once possessed and made to feel that atheistic doubt is a mark of mental superiority, while any tendency to honor the faith of those whose lives have made the nation great becomes a signal for intellectual pity and scorn.

On every hand the shadows are falling. Every day the blasphemy of the human heart becomes more daring and more blatant. And every day there is an evident lessening of uneasiness and concern.

Rumblings of a hitherto sleeping volcano are always a sufficient indication to those who have been living on its sides. Some take immediate warning and move to safety. Others recognize the condition but play with danger, leaving their removal until necessity is thrust upon them. Sometimes they leave it too long. They have no excuse; they were warned.

The inhabitants of our world are living on the slopes of a great volcano. Those who have ears to hear can detect its rumbling. Already the deadly lava of a fearful judgment is beginning to belch out. Two great personages are almost due: One clothed in light, the Lord of glory, and the other the embodiment of hell itself. Every man and woman of Adam's race is getting into line to join forces with one or the other. On which side will you be?

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XII
**THE OPENING OF THE WORLD DOOR FOR THIS
FINAL MANIFESTATION OF EVIL**

Some Details Concerning the Present Restrainer of Evil

THE next great event of dispensational importance is undoubtedly the removal of the present Restrainer of evil. The moment is to come when, in order that sin might be manifested in all its unfettered working, "he that now hindereth" must be "taken out of the way" (II Thess. 2:7).

Present world conditions are alarming, but the climax has not yet been reached, because hitherto the outworking of evil has in a measure been held in check by another power, which will one day be removed. The question, of course, immediately arises, How will this take place, and what will it mean?

By way of illustration, some Old Testament history may help us here. Our Lord Himself at least hinted at the comparison, saying:

"As the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For in the days that were before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be" (Matthew 24:37-39).

The reference has to do with events recorded in the sixth and seventh chapters of the book of Genesis. We must, however, take in an earlier chapter if we are to get the complete typical significance. In chapter five we are introduced to a saintly character named Enoch, of whom it is said that he "walked with God." This man, clearly typical of the separated Church of the present age, was caught up to heaven without paying the general race penalty of death. Of him it is written, "And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him" (Gen. 5:24).

Concerning this extraordinary happening, the writer to the Hebrews makes two things unmistakably clear:

- a. Before it happened Enoch had a distinct inward witness that even in so corrupt an age, he, as an individual, was pleasing to God.
- b. The fact of his translation was the reward of a definite faith (Heb. 11:3,4).

It is not without significance that the sixth chapter of Genesis records the amazing manifestation of world wickedness which immediately followed, a corruption declared to have been so great that God was "grieved at his heart" and sorry that He had made man. A limitation was then set on the time during which the Spirit of God would strive with man (Gen. 6:3-7).

Can it be that the presence of this holy man in a sinful society had hitherto been a bulwark against encroaching evil, holding it in restraint, and that the withdrawal of his influence liberated the devastating torrent which almost immediately afterward broke loose?

Genesis 6 describes the flood of world wickedness and chapter seven records the flood of world judgment which followed.

That, according to the plain declaration of our Lord, is an advance portraiture of end-time events in the present age. That same situation is to be repeated, but with the added pressure which the accumulating evil of the successive centuries will bring.

Before leaving His people, Jesus said, "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide *with you for ever*; even the Spirit of truth whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you" (John 14:16, 17).

It will be quickly seen that two things are stated in this passage:

- a. The Holy Spirit is not given to the world but to the Church.
- b. That gift is not temporary but eternal. The Church and the Spirit are to abide together *for ever*. Thus, wherever the Church is, whether in this world or out of it, the Holy Spirit will accompany her.

It is this twofold fact that gives to the Church her present world value. Did not our Lord say, "*Ye are the salt of the earth*"; but if the salt have lost his savour wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. *Ye are the light of the world*. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid" (Matt. 5:13, 14).

"Ye are the salt Ye are the light." To whom does He speak? Undoubtedly to His own people, and in thus speaking He makes two things unmistakably clear:

- a. That human society is in a condition of rotting corruption, and only the people who know a vital union with Him can be an effective check. Salt is an antiseptic, a preservative, a purifier, staving off putrefaction and keeping things sweet. Men never salt a living thing. The world is a dead, decaying carcass. John described it as "lying in wickedness" (I John 5:19).
- b. That human society is in a state of dense spiritual darkness, and only the people who know a vital union with Him are its means of illumination.

Today, the world does not realize this. By society in general the Christian who is clear-cut in his convictions is snubbed, cold-shouldered, and regarded as a general nuisance standing in the way of its fullest pleasure. That poor, blinded world treating him thus has no idea how much it owes to his very presence in its midst.

Dr. Alexander Maclaren once said, "The presence of a good man hinders the devil from having elbow room to do his work."

One day, and we think before long, that restraining presence of the Spirit-filled believer will suddenly be removed. And what then?

*The Expected Event of These Last Days Which Will Bring About
the Removal of the Restraint*

Imagine, if you can, a night densely dark, and forget for the moment that your geographical position governs your time. In that imagination, for the purpose of our present illustration, the time and the conditions are the same the world over. Suddenly, in city and countryside alike, a dense fog settles upon the already realized midnight darkness and every means of illumination is withdrawn. Added to this, the counteracting agencies against pestilence and disease which are so needful in our modern civilization cease to function, and the world is found to be in the grip of disease and darkness, with no one to lend a hand.

That, fanciful as it may seem, is but a faint conception of what is to happen in the moral and spiritual realm ere long in the world in which we live.

First of all, it will be well for us to ask and answer the question as to just *what* is going to happen, and *how*.

The answer is, The Church is due to be removed, and may be taken at any time. That removal is to be sudden, and, from the world's point of view, unexpected. The event will be so sudden that in as short a space of time as it takes an eye to twinkle it will all be over, and with that removal of the Church will also take place the withdrawal of the Holy Spirit.

And with what result? It will be like the opening of a great sluice through which a torrent is waiting to pour. It will be the removal of the spiritual *light* and *salt* which the world now so heartily abhors and yet so badly needs. It will be the supreme moment of darkness for which the powers of hell have so long been waiting. Restraint being gone, legions of darkness will pour

forth from the pit, and for a period Divinely allowed, the devil through his incarnate representative will govern the world.

"Because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be damned who believe not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness" (II Thess. 2:10-12).

And what then? Doubtless the shock of the Church's sudden translation will produce a sudden consternation among lifeless religionists who are left behind, and many, awakened by the consciousness of their folly, will seek for a part in that Bridehood Company when it is altogether too late.

"Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise and five were foolish. They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. While the bridegroom tarried they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil, for our lamps are gone out. But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. Afterward came the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh" (Matthew 25:1-13).

Three words would seem to stand as covering the content of this passage:

Profession. Of the ten virgins, *all* went forth to meet the bridegroom. They had one avowed purpose and a seeming preparation, for all "took their lamps." They are designated "*virgins*" in contrast with those of the previous chapter, who, as in the days of Noah, were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage (chapter 24:37, 38).

Translation. Yet a translation not of all who professed to be waiting. Of that professing Bridehood Company which went joyfully out, only fifty per cent met the bridegroom when he came. "They that were *ready* went in." Is it not possible that here is a warning note, indicating that of those who profess so much there is a danger of many being left behind? We shall do well to take heed.

Consternation. "Afterward came the other virgins." Then, no doubt, the churches will be filled—not with joyous worshipers but with frantic seekers. Then those poor deluded fools who have sat and smiled sarcastically as the preacher has spoken of Christ's expected return will lose their sneering curl of the lip in the agonizing cry, "Lord, Lord, open to us," only to hear the awful response, "I know you not."

Among the openly godless masses the effect will be very different. That which is so sacred to us will soon become the occasion for merriment, with ribald jest and gibe.

Another translation scene will help us in our thinking here. Let the reader open his Bible at the second chapter of the second book of Kings and read the entire chapter. It begins with the story of Elijah's translation, his rapture; he was *caught up*. The chapter continues with Elisha, on whom Elijah's mantle

has fallen. Two miracles are seen, first a divided Jordan and then the healing of bitter waters. Then comes a strange incident, which, at first sight, seems not to have much connection with what has preceded it.

"And he went up from thence unto Bethel: and as he was going up by the way, there came forth little children [better, minors or youths] out of the city, and mocked him, and said unto him, Go up, thou bald head; go up, thou bald head" (II Kings 2:23).

What is happening here? We have only to link the incident with the early portion of the chapter, and the whole picture is clear. Elijah has "*gone up*," and the godless mind is making sport of it. It is not very difficult to imagine the comedian on the stage, the voice over the radio, and the crowd on the street making it the basis of the latest joke, "The Jesus folk have *gone up*. Why didn't you go?"

Then the world will become like a ship without a rudder. Lawlessness will be let loose. Authorities will be helpless. At such a time it is not difficult to foresee what will happen. Any man who can step forward and handle things will be received by the entire world with open arms. The devil will have such a man. "Then shall that Wicked be revealed, . . . even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders" (II Thess. 2:8, 9).

Here at last is the masterpiece of Satan, the Man of Sin, the culmination of the age-long sin of man.

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XIII
**THE FULL FRUITION OF EVIL IN A FALLEN WORLD:
ANTICHRIST—HIS RISE; HIS REIGN; HIS RUIN**

Antichrist: His Rise Who? Where?

THERE has been much discussion as to the identity of Antichrist; who he will be and where he will originate; and, we are frank to say, some very rash and unwise speculations have been made. The seventh chapter of the book of Daniel and the thirteenth chapter of the book of Revelation provide a basis for careful study, and must be read together; to these let the reader turn again.

In Daniel's portraiture this weird personality is a product of the fourth beast, which is the Roman Empire, a ten-horned kingdom. He is described as "*a little*" or insignificant "*horn*" coming up among the other horns on the head of the monster.

In John's Apocalypse he is a product of "*the sea*," and is said to "*come up*" out of it. The *sea* in Scripture imagery is generally understood to stand for the masses, the world's peoples, and when in commotion, for the masses of humanity in confusion. "There shall be . . . upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth" (Luke 21:25, 26).

This, then, at last seems clear, and would be both safe and sane to state: Antichrist will rise in a phenomenal manner out of comparative obscurity to dominate the Roman bloc and ultimately to become Emperor of the entire world.

In the Revelation chapter a second character is seen and is designated in verse eleven, "*another beast.*" In contrast with the first beast who came up "*out of the sea,*" this second beast is said to come up "*out of the earth.*" The earth suggests something more stable, some institution of long standing.

These two men will evidently work together. The office of the first is political—the world emperor; while the office of the second is religious; in all probability he will be a pope of Rome.

Here, then, is another evidence of Satan's counterfeiting work. This time it is a *sham trinity*, a vile threefoldness of evil—the dragon, the first beast, and the second beast. The dragon who gives power to the beast is undoubtedly Satan, the *Father of Lies*, who abode not in the truth, an awful contrast with Jehovah, the *Father of Lights*, with whom is no variableness, neither the shadow that is cast by turning. The first beast, the object of world worship, is the counterfeit of Jesus, the Son of God.

The second beast, who is working all the time on behalf of the first beast, and securing for him worship and adoration, is the third member of this abominable trinity, just as the Holy Spirit is now working to glorify Jesus, the Son of God.

*Antichrist: His Reign
The Great Tribulation*

The reign of Antichrist is destined to be the most amazing period that this world has ever known. Three general statements will cover it.

It will open in world-wide wonder. There is little doubt that this demon-possessed genius will bring to a distracted world a period of temporary prosperity. As things are now heading, every day is taking a bewildered civilization another step nearer world-wide bankruptcy. The cry is already going up for *a strong man*, someone who can show us a way out. In individual countries this very thing temporarily has happened. In Italy, a Mussolini; in Germany, a Hitler. Those viewing things from the outside had no doubt as to where these dictatorships would ultimately end, but it would be folly for any one to say that they had nothing attractive to offer. Much necessary cleaning up was done, and while there was more underlying dissatisfaction than many of us even dreamed, there were many who were prepared to shout themselves hoarse with the cries of "*Il Duce*" and "*Heil Hitler*" and not allow a voice to be raised against them.

If it has been possible for these men suddenly to emerge from obscurity and become masters of empire almost overnight, it is surely only one step farther to individual *world mastery* for the man who can display a sufficiently alluring program and who has the audacity, with master hand, to seize control of the world in order to carry out his program.

Our first mental reaction here is the thought of sheer impossibility and utter absurdity. How could such a thing be? We may also ask, How could an obscure newspaper editor so unexpectedly put his hand on the pulse of Italy or an Austrian house painter become undisputed ruler of Germany? In a

world so topsy-turvy anything can happen. A despairing world, a man with a program, demon power behind him, and the rest is easily imagined.

It will develop into an unbearable tyranny. A world emperor, demon-possessed, is hardly likely to be a paragon of humility. From his seat of authority established in Rome his voice will reach the world. Radio has already made this possible. In almost as little time as it takes him to utter his commands the world in every continent will receive them. Two things will be demanded:

(1) *Emperor worship.* A man in the place of God (II Thess. 2:4; Rev. 13). Some have seen in this prophecy a foreshadowing of the papal heresy in the Roman Catholic apostasy. We believe, of course, that the papal claim to infallibility for the occupant of Saint Peter's chair is a heresy to be withstood, and that the final Pope, whoever he may be, will play an important part in the drama which winds up the present age, but *the Pope is not Antichrist.*

Emperor worship was the custom in ancient Rome. This seems not to have entailed the belief that the emperors personally were gods, but rather that in the emperor was seen the symbol of Divine power in the empire. Rome had its multitude of gods, which were publicly and privately worshipped, but the emperor stood for a Divine unification of them all.

This final world emperor, who is to extend his sway from Rome, will go beyond any claim of his early predecessors, and having taken possession of Palestine, sitting in the very temple of God, will openly proclaim that *he is God*, not representatively but personally. In the boldest and most brazen fashion the world has ever known he will declare himself *the great Creator God* and as such demand the unquestioning homage and allegiance of a deluded world.

(2) *The Emperor's Mark* (Rev. 13:16-18). Every worshiper must bear the emperor's mark. That a devotee should bear the mark of his deity is not too much to ask, and emperor worshipers will be compelled to carry the mark which is the emperor's seal.

"And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads; and that no man might buy or sell, save that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six."

Without this mark there will be no possible way of earning a livelihood, and no possibility of purchasing the necessities of life. In that day men must worship or be social outcasts; they must bow down or starve.

It will introduce "The Great Tribulation." Concerning it, our Lord Himself said, "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved; but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened" (Matt. 24:21, 22).

This will have to do with post-rapture Gentile religious professors—those who through their spiritual unreadiness missed the rapture and were left behind. Determined to stamp out all traces of God from the world, this monster in human form will strike wherever religious profession is suspected, and will strike hard.

This will have to do with the Jewish nation. As we have already seen, one of Antichrist's master strokes will be his *league* or *covenant* with the Jewish

people (Dan. 9:27). This doubtless will be made either just before or immediately after the saints are gone.

"In the midst of the week," that is, after a period of three and a half years, he is to show his true colors and break the agreement, becoming the open enemy of the Jewish people and seeking their utter extermination. What will follow is variously described, but a few selected verses here will be enough.

"For thus saith the Lord, We have heard a voice of trembling, of fear, and not of peace. Ask ye now, and see whether a man doth travail with child? Wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in travail, and all faces are turned into paleness. Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: *it is even the time of Jacob's trouble . . .*" (Jeremiah 30:5-7).

"And there shall be *a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation* even to that same time" (Daniel 12:1).

"For then shall be *great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world* to this time, no, nor ever shall be" (Matthew 24:21).

By this time the reader will understand that when we speak of "*The Great Tribulation*" we do not mean the ordinary troubles of life intensified, but rather a period in the world's history with the forces of righteousness withdrawn, when the very worst that hell itself can pour out upon a sin-cursed humanity is realized to the full.

The thought behind the word *tribulation* is that of a threshing or harrowing instrument. It carries the further idea of pressure, the squeezing of grapes for the extraction of juice. The Church age is the time of the believer's

tribulation. Our Lord said, "In the world ye shall have tribulation" (John 16:33). The apostle reminded his Roman readers that "tribulation worketh patience." He also declared, "We glory in tribulations" (Rom. 5:3, 4). On his missionary journeys he encouraged his new converts, who were feeling the pressure of persecution, saying, "Through much tribulation we must enter into the kingdom of God" (Acts 14:22).

The *Church's tribulation* however is not under the torture of a tyrant but under the tender supervision of a throbbing Father heart with a plentiful supply of Divine grace, for it is written that He "comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God" (II Cor. 1:4). This present tribulation, under grace faithfully endured, carries with it the Divine assurance to the tested soul, "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I will also keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth" (Rev. 3:10).

*Antichrist: His Ruin
The Battle of Armageddon and Its Attendant Features*

The word Armageddon was popularized during the 1914-1918 section of world conflict. Orators and writers referred to it as "*This Armageddon*," while a leading British statesman of that day declared it to be "the world's last war," a "war to end war," a struggle "to make the world a fit place for heroes to live in," and a fight "to make the world a safe place for democracy."

To those who knew the teachings of the Word of God one of two things was immediately evident. Either it was statesman's bluff, of which no national leader seems to be entirely innocent, or else it was the utterance of

a man ignorant of the teaching of the inspired Word concerning the events of the end time.

There are five features about the Bible *Armageddon* not yet found in any other war. That is, five combined features, all of which necessarily hang together. They may be stated thus:

- (1) The location of the conflict.
- (2) The identity of the combatants.
- (3) The reason for the conflict.
- (4) The nature of the conflict.
- (5) The result of the conflict.

These we shall take up in the order stated and follow Antichrist to his predicted doom.

The Location of the Conflict

Armageddon is not merely a word descriptive of great slaughter, which may be applied to *any* conflict *anywhere*. It is a real place, having distinct geographical location. No other battle, no matter what its dimensions and how great its horrors, can ever become the fulfilment of the prophetically described conflict bearing that name.

The location is also called *Megiddo* and *The vale of Esdraelon*. It lies between the hills of Galilee and Samaria and is already famous for some notable battles which have been fought there. Among others three should be especially mentioned.

It was here that Deborah, the famous woman judge of Israel, along with Barak, fought the tyrant Sisera (Judges 5:9).

It was in this valley Josiah met Pharaoh Necho (II Kings 23:19, 20). Here, too, Judas Maccabæus, the patriot of the period between the Old and New Testaments, is recorded as having fought (I Macc. 13:14).

In the final conflict the actual fighting will of course extend far beyond this valley, for no modern warfare could be confined to so limited a place; but the valley itself is to be the *gathering ground* for Antichrist's forces, and from it the fighting will cover the entire land.

Concerning it, Joel has written, "I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat" (Joel 3:2). Isaiah pictures the conquering Christ as a blood-stained warrior coming from Edom, which is farther south (Isa. 63:1-6). Some have sought to spiritualize this passage and make it a picture of Calvary, but they forget that the blood with which the Conqueror is now stained is not His own, but that of His conquered foes. This has never yet taken place, but the time is now not far distant when as Conquering Warrior He will come forth, His "vesture dipped in blood" (Rev. 19:13). If Christ is to be seen coming from Edom, then the range of battle will have been beyond that of the valley described.

Ezekiel pictures hosts which shall "ascend" and shall "be like a cloud to cover the land" (Ezek. 38). What clearer picture of modern air forces could be found? And when we hear the boasts of modern powers as to the thousands of planes which could be put into the air at any moment we are not surprised that the foe is described as "ascending" and of "covering the land like a cloud."

John, in apocalyptic vision, saw this conflict, and reported the sickening fact of a river of blood, the result of the slaughter, flowing for the space of sixteen hundred furlongs, that is two hundred miles, the entire length of Palestine (Rev. 14:20).

The thought of Palestine being drenched from end to end in human blood is more significant than at first it may appear. It was upon this very soil that the sacred blood of God's beloved Son was poured out. The Jews demanded it and the Gentiles shed it. When Pilate, seeking to release Him, declared himself to be "innocent of the blood of this just person" the people answered and said, "His blood be upon us and upon our children" (Matt. 27:22-25).

That this awful condemnation was visited upon the Jewish nation then alive history bears witness in the record of the Roman sack of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. There the slaughter was so great that Jerusalem's streets are said to have run with Jewish blood. But though the Jews were responsible for the demand, the Gentiles committed the act, and upon them too, through the outcome of their own madness, will come the awful judgment upon the soil of that same land.

Armageddon must be fought in Palestine. Neither France, Belgium, nor any other country will answer to it. The blood of God's Son cries for vindication upon a Christ-rejecting, sin-cursed race, and it will take place on the very soil on which His blood was shed.

The Identity of the Combatants

Joel sees "*all nations . . . multitudes, multitudes*" (Joel 3:2, 14). John sees "the kings of the earth and of *the whole world*" gather to the battle of that great day of God Almighty (Rev. 16:14).

At this point the thirty-eighth and thirty-ninth chapters of Ezekiel's prophecy will repay a careful reading. "The whole world" will doubtless be represented by the armies of its various nations: Antichrist, with his League of Nations; "the king of the north," a future prince or leader of Russia, backed by a second powerful league of nations, including the Mohammedan peoples; "the king of the south," whoever this may represent; "the kings of the sunrising," China and Japan; the devil and his legions of hell; Christ himself and the armies of heaven. What a gathering!

The Reason for the Conflict

This may be stated as threefold:

- a. *The center of animus* will be Jerusalem. Zechariah records it thus: "And I will gather all nations *against Jerusalem* to battle" (Zech. 14:2).
- b. *The underlying cause* will be the utter hatred of God whom Israel will be regarded as representing.

"The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, *against the Lord, and against his anointed*" (Psalm 2:2).

"And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war *against him that sat on the horse*, and against his army" (Revelation 19:19).

The great fact now in question will be the sovereignty of the earth, and this mighty effort will be to exterminate Israel, Jehovah's people, and thus sweep

away the very name of Jehovah from the earth. It will be the final attempt to dethrone God and deify man.

c. *A contributing cause* will be the unprecedented prosperity of Palestine.

The world is only just beginning to realize what amazing wealth is stored there, coupled with the personal possessions among the Jews themselves. That wealth is already beginning to arouse the envy and greed of the world's rich bankrupt nations, and thieving governments are not slow to find "reasons" for amazing levies which will take it from them.

The Jewish people have displayed a peculiar aptitude for acquiring wealth. That wealth will be taken by many of them to the land to which they as a nation have begun to return. When they left Egypt, they despoiled their oppressors. Some world leaders have already sought to forestall that, but the Jewish people will do it again.

This is clearly foreshadowed by Ezekiel when he says:

"And thou shalt say, I will go up to the land of unwall'd villages; I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates. To take a spoil, and to take a prey; to turn thine hand upon the desolate places that are now inhabited, and upon the people that are gathered *out of the nations, which have gotten cattle and goods*, and dwell in the midst of the land" (Ezekiel 38:11, 12).

The mineral wealth of the Dead Sea also will have its attraction. Its amazing resources are said to total a thousand billion dollars, or two hundred and forty billion English pounds.

A statistical report by the British government is reported to estimate the Dead Sea contents as follows:

Potash. 1,300 million tons. Value: 14 billion pounds, or 70 billion dollars.

Bromine. 853 million tons. Value: 52 billion pounds, or 160 billion dollars.

Salt. 11,900 million tons. Value: 9,500 million pounds, or 47,500 million dollars.

Gypsum. 81 million tons. Value: 24 million pounds, or 120 million dollars.

Magnesium chloride. 22 billion tons. Value: 165 billion pounds, or 825 billion dollars.

Such wealth is staggering, surpassing the total riches of all the nations combined, and in their bankrupt condition it will be little wonder that they should be stirred with envy and seek some pretext for securing it.

The Nature of the Conflict

It will be stirred up and started by demons. (See Rev. 9.) This, of course, may be said indirectly of all wars, but this above all others will be devilish in the extreme.

We have already called attention to the horrible carnage which will produce a two hundred mile stretch of human blood (Rev. 14:15-20). Nature itself, under the curse because of man's sin, will also play an important part.

(See Ezek. 38:22; Zech. 12:4; 14:12). The sky will be darkened; the earth will quake before the onrushing armies; there will be storm, tempest, overflowing rain, tremendous hailstones, with fire and brimstone from the skies. Horses will be smitten with blindness and their riders will go mad. Man's eyes will consume away in their sockets. Hail is to fall on men, every stone the weight of a talent. The Jewish talent for silver weight is about one hundred and fifteen pounds, and for weighing other things about one hundred and thirty-five pounds. Whichever may be meant here will be heavy enough when they fall. God is fighting now.

The Result of the Conflict

Two Scripture passages will tell the story, one in the Old Testament and one in the New:

"Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south. And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: and the LORD my God shall come, and all the saints with thee. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear, nor dark: but it shall be one day which shall be known to the Lord, not day, nor night; but it shall come to pass that at evening time it shall be light. And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea; in summer and in winter shall it be. And the LORD shall be king over all the

earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one. All the land shall be turned as a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem: and it shall be lifted up, and inhabited in her place, from Benjamin's gate unto the place of the first gate, unto the corner gate, and from the tower of Hananeel unto the king's winepresses. And men shall dwell in it, and there shall be no more utter destruction; but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited. And this shall be the plague wherewith the LORD will smite all the people that have fought against Jerusalem; their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth. And it shall come to pass in that day, that a great tumult from the Lord shall be among them; and they shall lay hold every one on the hand of his neighbour, and his hand shall rise up against the hand of his neighbour. And Judah also shall fight at Jerusalem; and the wealth of all the heathen round about shall be gathered together, gold, and silver, and apparel, in great abundance. And so shall be the plague of the horse, of the mule, of the camel, and of the ass, and of all the beasts that shall be in these tents, as this plague. And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles. And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain. And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, that have no rain; there shall be the plague, wherewith the LORD will smite the heathen that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles. This shall be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all nations that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles. In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD; and the pots in the LORD'S house shall be like the bowls before the altar. Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the LORD of hosts: and all they that sacrifice shall come and take of them, and see the therein: and in that day there shall be

no more the Canaanite in the house of the LORD of hosts" (Zechariah 14:3-21).

"And I saw heaven opened, and behold a White horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood; and his name is called the Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS. And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; that ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great. And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh. And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and cast him

into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season. And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them; and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years" (Revelation 19:11-20:6).

THE DAY OF WRATH
A Study of Prophecy's Light on Today
By
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ENDNOTES

[1 The possibility of Germany invading Palestine certainly seems to be remote, but God's Word declares it, and however unlikely it may seem, it will certainly take place. She may be temporarily dismembered, but what is to hinder Russia, dissatisfied at the Peace Table, from gathering scattered remnants, including Germany, and marching on Palestine?